

Dr. Ambedkar As The Member of Executive Governor General Council Questions and Answers

PART IV

From 14th September 1942 to 12th April 1946

134

Drop in the Output of Coal

250. K. C. Neogy : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to refer to his statement in reply to starred question No. 349, asked by me in the Legislative Assembly on the 20th March, 1943, to the effect that the drop in the production of coal was so slight that no detailed enquiry had been held into its cause, and state whether it is a fact that there has been a considerable drop in the output of coal both in British India and in the Indian States since January last?

(b) If the answer to (a) be in the affirmative, is the Honourable Member in a position to indicate the extent of such drop, month by month, ever since it was noticed ?

(c) Was any warning given about the threatened coal shortage by any trade organisation or any individual member of the trade to the knowledge of Government ? If so, when did such warning come to the knowledge of Government for the first time, and what steps, if any, were taken thereupon ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Compared with the corresponding month of last year, the output of coal in British India and Indian States has shown a decrease during 1943. During the first 5 months of the year the drop was slight ; but from June onwards it has become more considerable.

(b) 1940 was the peak year for coal production. Since then production has fallen slightly year by year. The fall assumed serious proportion from June 1943. Compared with the corresponding months of 1942, the output in June, July and August of this year fell by about 353,000 tons each month, while September showed a decrease of 299,000 tons.

(c) A warning was given by an individual member of the trade in August 1943. Government were already well aware of the situation by that time and were actively considering remedial measures. The following are some of the principal steps that have been taken to improve the situation.

(1) More wagons have been provided to take away coal, particularly in the Bengal and Bihar fields.

(2) Efforts are being made to ensure the prompter delivery of colliery stores and machinery.

(3) Women have, since August, been permitted to work underground in

the Central Provinces and Berar coalfields.

(4) Action has been taken to prevent interference with colliery Labour from military activities in the coal fields.

(5) Schemes are under preparation to provide a greater quantity of consumer goods for collieries and in particular of food, and arrangements are being made to ensure an adequate ration at concession rates to the miners.

(6) Welfare officers are about to be appointed in the Bengal and Bihar coalfields to promote the health and general welfare of miners.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is the Honourable Member in a position to indicate the principal factors that contributed to this coal shortage ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Sir, the principal factor that contributed to the shortage of coal is undoubtedly the shortage of Labour. That was due to the fact that Labour was drawn away from coal Fields by the ' Grow More Food ' campaign and by the military works that were started near about the area where the coal mines are situated.

135

The Coal Trade Conference at Delhi

251. K. C. Neogy : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state whether the principal object of the Conference of representatives of coal trade and other interests, that was held in Delhi on the 23rd October last under his chairmanship, was to consider the question of increasing the output of coal ? If so, what were the circumstances that led to the decision to hold the conference, and the result of the discussions thereat ?

(b) Has the present effort to increase the output of coal been influenced in any degree by the necessity of stimulating an increased export of coal from India for war purposes or otherwise ?

(c) Is it a fact that in a letter issued by the department of Labour to the invitees at the Conference, mention was made of the persistent and increasing fall in the output of coal coupled with the increasing demand for Indian coal, both inside and outside India, which was stated to have caused the Central Government acute anxiety ? When was such anxiety first caused to the Government of India and due to what circumstances, and what action has been taken ever since for the purpose of improving the situation, and with what result ?

(d) Is the internal supply of coal in the country likely to be affected in any manner by any policy that Government may have in view with the object of stimulating the export of coal on Government or private account ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes, Government believed that one of the principal reasons for the decline in output was shortage of Labour. If this shortage could be made good, the fall in production would be arrested and an increase to the target figures would become probable. Government were anxious to secure the full co-operation of employers in any measures they proposed for this purpose. The principal result of the discussions was an

agreement that in Bengal and Bihar the Employers' Associations should initiate schemes on uniform lines for the supply of foodgrains and other commodities to their Labour and the Government of India should assist the Associations in giving effect to such schemes.

(b) An increase in output of coal is necessary to meet the internal requirements of Indian industry as these have increased and output has diminished.

(c) Yes. Since the beginning of the War, Government have been anxious to maintain the output of coal at its maximum. The peak year for coal production was 1940. There was a very slight fall in 1941 on the 1940 figures and a further slight drop in 1942. It seems more than likely that the 1943 figures will show a further drop on the 1942 figures.

From about June of this year, it became plain that output was not going to be sufficient to meet the increased demands for coal being made by essential consumers such as War Industries, railways and for military projects of the first importance. Supplies of coal for all consumers have accordingly been rationed. In order to meet these rationed demands, and such outside demands as it might feel necessary to meet, Government have to ensure that 25.65 million tons of coal per annum will be made available for consumption. This is a larger quantity than has ever been made available before; and measures to increase production have, therefore, become of the utmost urgency.

As regards the action that has been taken to improve the situation, the Honourable Member is referred to the answer given to part (c) of his starred question No. 15. It is too early yet to assess the results of these and other measures.

(d) No.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh : Is it a fact that in order to increase the output of coal production, female Labour has been employed underground in coal mines ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar**: I said so.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh : If it is so, will the Honourable Member say how long female Labour will be employed in these mines ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Well, while the emergency lasts.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh : Will the Honourable Member tell me what precautions have been taken to look after these female Labour employed underground in the mines ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: We are contemplating measures and if my Honourable friend will table a question some time in the next Session, I will give him some information.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Has there been any suggestion from His Majesty's Government for the purpose of stimulating export of coal ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar** : I have no information on the point.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : Next question.

136

Appointments of Managers of Government of India Presses, New Delhi and Calcutta

253. **H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait** : Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state :

(a) whether he is aware that for the recent appointment of Managers of the Government of India Presses, New Delhi and Calcutta, the claims of the senior-most Muslim assistant Managers were overlooked ; if so, the reason therefor;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Manager of the Government of India Press, New Delhi, refused to relieve a Muslim clerk recently selected for a clerical job in the office of the controller of Printing and Stationery, while he relieved a number of non-Muslim clerks selected for clerical posts in the Controller's Office, Assembly Department and Supply Department;

(c) whether it is a fact that the Assistant Manager of the Government of India Press, New Delhi, ordered the transfer of six Muslim piece-composition of the Lino Section ; if so, the reasons for such wholesale transfer of Muslims from this Section ;

(d) whether it is a fact that the post of a correction checker in the Government of India Press, New Delhi, was recently filled by the officiating Manager by the appointment of a junior new-scale man, overlooking the claims of the senior incumbent in the old scale ; if so, why ;

(e) whether the Managers and Assistant Managers of Government Presses are empowered to make appointments and promotions and order transfers and declare certain posts selection posts ; if so, whether any rules have been laid down for their guidance in these matters;

(f) whether the Honourable Member proposes to institute an enquiry to find out whether these rules are strictly observed by these officers in all cases; and

(g) in view of the frequent and increasing complaints about arbitrary and unjust actions in these matters by the authorities of the Government of India Presses, whether the Honourable Member proposes to consider the advisability of constituting an independent committee with powers mentioned in (e) above ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) No.

(b) No.

(c) Yes. This was done in the normal course of sectional interchange which takes place every 3 months to allow each worker periods of easy and strenuous work. Three non-Muslim piece compositors were also transferred along with the Muslims and 2 Muslim piece compositors brought on to the Lino Section.

(d) Yes. The post of Correction Checker being a selection post, the best man available was selected on merit.

(e) Managers of the Government of India Presses are empowered to appoint and promote men to certain classes of posts in accordance with the rules laid down in the Departmental Handbook. They are not competent to declare any post as selection post. (1) and

(g). No specific irregularities of the nature mentioned above have so far occurred necessitating the action suggested.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait : With reference to part (d) my Honourable friend admitted that the claims of a Muslim were overlooked for certain reasons. Is he aware that the Muslim whose claims were overlooked had worked for 22 years ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar** : I am prepared to accept that from my Honourable friend, although I have no information.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait : Then he said that the answers to (a) and (b) were in the negative. Will he take it from me that with regard to (a) the appointments have been made this year.

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar** : I must have notice of that.

137

Trade Unions Supplied with Government Publications, etc.

35. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali : Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state:

(a) the names of the Trade Unions, both registered and unregistered, separately, whose objects are not confined to one province ;

(b) the names of the Trade Unions, both registered and unregistered, separately, who are supplied official publications free of cost;

(c) the names of the Trade Unions, both registered and unregistered separately, who were invited to take part in the Tripartite Labour Conference and Committees ; and

(d) the reasons for the differential treatment, if any, in the subject matters referred to in parts (b) and (c) ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) A list of registered trade unions, whose objects are not confined to one province, compiled from materials readily available is attached. Particulars regarding unregistered trade unions are not available.

(b) I presume the Honourable Member is referring only to unions whose objects are not confined to one province.

Copies of certain bulletins, annual reports, etc., have been furnished free of cost, on request, to the two All-India Associations of workers, namely the All-India Trade Union Congress and the Indian Federation of Labour. No official publication is supplied free of cost to any individual trade union as

such.

(c) The constitution of the Tripartite Labour Conference and the Standing Labour Committee provides for the nomination of workers' representatives in the following manner:

(i) For the Labour Conference—

11 representatives of employees, of whom 4 will be nominated by Government in agreement with the All-India Trade Union Congress, 4 will be nominated by Government in agreement with the Indian Federation of Labour, and 3 will be nominated by Government as representatives of other employees interests.

(ii) For the Standing Labour Committee—

5 representatives of employees, 4 of whom will be nominated by the Labour Member in agreement with the two All-India Associations of workers and the fifth nominated independently by the Labour Member.

The nominations to the Conference and the Committees have been in accordance with their constitution and there has been no question of any differential treatment between different unions.

(d) It will be clear from the replies to (b) and (c) that no differential treatment has in fact occurred.

Central Trade Union registered in the various Provinces

Printing Presses-1. Government of India Press Workers Union.

Seamen—

2. Indian Merchants Navy Officers Association, Bombay.

Miscellaneous—

3. The All-India Telegraph Line Staff Union, Lahore.

4. The Indian Sugar Industry Employees Association, Lucknow.

5. Indian Sugar Mills Association, Calcutta.

6. Indian Jute Mills Association, Calcutta.

7. Imperial Bank of India, Indian Staff Association, Calcutta.

8. Central Council of Tobacco Manufacturing Workers Union.

9. All-India Telegraph Workmen's Union, Lahore.

10. The Indian Southern Provinces Sugar Marketing Board, Madras.

Railway and Transport—

11. N. W. Rly. Junior Clerks Association.

12. Bengal Assam Rail Road Workers' Union.

13. Assam Bengal Rly. Employees Association.

14. E. I. Railway Employees Association, Calcutta.

15. Bengal and Assam Railway Employees Association.

16. B. N. R. Employees Union, Calcutta.

17. B. N. Rly. Indian Labour Union, Kharagpur.

18. N. W. Rly. Employees Union, Karachi.

19. G. I. P. Railwaymen's Union, Bombay.

20. G. I. P. Railway Accounts Staff Union, Bombay.

21. B. B. & C. I. Railway Employees Association, Ahmedabad.
22. B. B. & C. 1. Railwaymen's Union, Bombay.
23. National Union of Railwaymen of India & Burma, Bombay.
24. B. B. & C. 1. Railway Employees Union, Bombay.
25. G. 1. P. Railway Contractors & Licenced Coolies Union, Bhusawal.
26. N. W. Railway Accounts Union, Lahore.
27. N. W. Railway Union, Lahore.
28. E. I. Railwaymen's Union, Lucknow.
29. Railway Workers Association, Moradabad.
30. E. 1. Railway Guards' Association, Lucknow.
31. Railway Workmen's Union of India, Allahabad.
32. B. N. Railwaymen's Association, Gorakhpur.
33. E. B. Railway Workers' Union.
34. Association of Accountants, E. 1. Railway.
35. Association of Accountants, N. W. Railway, Lahore.
36. All-India Railway Mechanical Workers' Federal Union, Lahore.
37. Delhi Sonipat Bus Service Union, Sonipat.
38. Ittehad Motor Union, Panipat.
39. N. W. Railway Guards Association, Lahore.
40. Federated Union of the N. W. Railway Workers, Lahore.
41. Union of the E. 1. Railway Ticket Checking staff, Calcutta.
42. E. 1. Railway Joint Hands Union, Hooghly.
43. All-India Railwaymen's Union, Nagpur.
44. United Union of N. W. R. Workers, Lahore.
45. Delhi-Garmuktesar Motor Association.
46. East Indian Railway Muslim Employees Association, Lucknow.
47. S. S. Light Railway Employees Union, Saharanpur.
48. B. N. W. Railway Workers Association, Gorakhpur.
49. E. 1. Railway Workers Association, Calcutta.
50. The Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway Employees' Union, Perambur, Madras.
51. The South Indian Railway Labour Union, Golden Rock, Trichinopoly.
52. The South Indian Railway Employees Association, Villupuram.
53. The All-India Railwaymen's Federation, Mylapore, Madras.

138

**Communal Composition in the Office of the Conciliation Officer
(Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour**

1. Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury : Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state :

(a) how many office clerks there are in the office of the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour ;

(b) how many Inspectors of Railway Labour have been appointed temporarily or permanently from December, 1942, upto the second week of February, 1944; and

(c) out of these appointments, how many were recruited from— (i) depressed classes, (ii) caste Hindus, (iii) Muslims, and (iv) members of other communities ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Eleven including a Stenographer.

(b) Five temporary Inspectors only have been appointed from December, 1942, upto January, 1944.

(c) (i) Three. (ii) and (iv) None. (iii) Two.

139

Muslim Inspectors of Railway Labour

2. Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state the number of persons who served temporarily as Inspectors of Railway Labour and who were trained hands at the time of the first appointment of Mr. Jadhav, Conciliation Officer (Railways) ?

(b) How many of these Inspectors were Muslims, and how many of the Muslims who had served temporarily as Inspectors were given chance of appointment to permanent or quasi-permanent vacancies ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Two.

(b) Both were Muslims. One has secured appointment elsewhere and the other at present officiating as an Inspector of Railway Labour.

140

Depressed Class Appointments of Inspectors of Railway Labour

3. Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state if it is true that five Inspectors of Railway Labour posted respectively at Dacca, Tatanagar, Ajmer, Asansol and Jalpainguri went on deputation to the Central Civil Supplies Department or as Civilian Labour Welfare Officers, in the military Department ?

(b) Is it true that all these five long standing officiating vacancies which will continue up to the duration of the War, were filled up by five depressed class Hindu Inspectors who have been appointed arbitrarily by the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour, superseding the claims of two Muslims who have served temporarily for more than six months and who are trained hands ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Yes, but all deputations were not to the Civil Supplies Department or as Civilian Labour Welfare Officers.

(b) No, as will be clear from the reply to part (c) of question No. 1 of the same member.

141

Depressed Class Appointments of Inspectors of Railway Labour

4. Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury: Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state if it is a fact that five long standing officiating vacancies of Inspectors of Railway Labour occurred because of the deputation of two Muslims, viz., Mr. A. Hamid and Mr. A. Karim, one Sikh, Mr. T. Singh, and two caste Hindus ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : It is true that the vacancies arose because of the deputations.

142

Depressed Class Appointments of Inspectors of Railway Labour

5. Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury: Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state if it is a fact that five depressed class appointments of Inspectors of Railway Labour were made without any advertisement and without selection by the Selection Board ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : No. Only three Scheduled Class candidates were appointed. Recruitment was not made by advertisement or by a Selection Board.

143

Depressed Class Appointments of Inspectors of Railway Labour

6. Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state if the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour was justified in appointment of all the five new depressed class Inspectors without any selection ? Are they from amongst relatives of his own province of Bombay ?

(b) Was the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour justified in appointing his relations and his own community people as clerks and Inspectors ? Is the Honourable Member aware that there were qualified depressed class candidates from other provinces also ?

(c) Why did not consider the claims of those who once served creditably in officiating vacancies as Inspectors ?

(d) Why did the Supervisor of Railway Labour appoint Inspectors without consulting the Selection Board ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a), (c) and (d). I would refer to my reply to the previous question. The candidates appointed are not related to the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour.

(b) I have given the information relating to Inspectors. As regards clerks out of eleven only one belongs to the Scheduled Caste whom the present Conciliation Officer (Railways) has appointed.

144

Depressed Class Appointments of Inspectors of Railway Labour

7. Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury: Is the Honourable Member for Labour prepared to consider the desirability of filling up the five vacancies of Inspectors of Railway Labour by forming a Selection Board so that the legitimate claims of all communities may not be jeopardised ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The question of filling of vacancies in the grade of Inspectors is under examination of Government.

145

**Bengalee Inspectors in the Office of the Conciliation Officer
(Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour**

8. Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury : (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state how many Bengalee Inspectors there are in the office of the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour ? If there is only one Bengalee, why are not more Bengalees appointed ?

(b) Is it not a fact that there are sufficient number of qualified Bengalees, both amongst Hindus and Muslims, who are awaiting chances ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Two. (b) There may be sufficient and suitable Bengalees available for appointment but the presumption behind the question that the appointments are made with any reference to the province of a candidate is not correct.

146

**Qualifications of Mr. D. G. Jadhav, Conciliation Officer (Railways)
and Supervisor of Railway Labour**

9. Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member state if it is true that Mr. D. G. Jadhav is at present the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour, Government of India ? If so, what are his qualifications ? Was he in Government service or in Railway service before ?

(b) Will the Honourable Member please state if it is a fact that Mr. Adur Rahman Puri, the Head Clerk of the Office of the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour has been degraded to the post of an Inspector ? If so, what are the reasons ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar** : (a) Yes. Mr. D. G. Jadhav at present holds the post. Mr. Jadhav was an elected member of the Bombay Legislative Assembly prior to his present appointment. Besides being an elected member of the Backward Class Board, Bombay, he had served on many Select Committees, Development Boards, Advisory Committees and was an arbitrator of Co-operative Societies in the District of East Khandesh. He is a B.A., L.L.B., having graduated in 1934 and taken his law degree in 1940. He has not been in Government or Railway Service before.

(b) The Honourable Member is presumably referring to Mr. Abdul Hamid Puri. He is reverted to his substantive post of an Inspector on expiry of his tenure of appointment as Head Clerk.

147

Conciliation Officers (Railways) and Supervisors of Railway Labour

10. Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury : (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to slate who were the Conciliation Officers (Railways)

and Supervisors of Railway Labour since its creation ?

(b) Does he consider it desirable to post an I.C.S. Officer or otherwise an experienced officer as Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The combined post of Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour was held only by Mr. Khaleeli, I.C.S., before Mr. Jhadev was appointed to it.

(b) I do not consider it necessary that the post should be held only by an I.C.S. Officer or some other person who has had experience as an Officer of Government.

148

Output, etc. of Coal in British India and the States

19. Mr. K. C. Neogy : Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state:

(a) the output of coal in British India and in the States, separately, for the years 1941, 1942 and 1943 ;

(b) the stocks of coal in British India and in the States as on the 31st December of 1941, 1942 and 1943, and

(c) the despatches of coal, including the colliery consumption, from collieries in British India and in the States during the years 1941, 1942 and 1943 ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The output of coal in British India and the States during 1941 and 1942 was :

		1941	1942
British India	...	26,088,600	25,949,800
States	...	3,260,400	3,385,100

(b) Stocks of coal in British India on the 31st December 1941, were 2,767,500 tons. Stocks on 31st December 1942, were estimated by the C.I.M. to have been 2,521,600 tons. The figures reported by collieries were found to be greatly exaggerated when they were checked by the C.I.M. Stock figures of States are not available.

(c) The despatches of coal including the colliery consumption from collieries in British India during the years 1941 and 1942 were 24,257,700 tons and 22,695,800 tons respectively. The despatches of coal excluding colliery consumption from collieries in the States during 1941 and 1942 were 3,243,200 tons and 3,370,500 tons, respectively. Figures of colliery consumption in the States are not available. It is not in the public interest to disclose figures for 1943 at present.

149

Coal Position

20. Mr. K. C. Neogy : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state to what extent the present output of coal is below the requirements of

the country?

(b) Is it a fact that recently the Department of the Chief Inspector of Mines measured the stocks of the different collieries as reported to him by the respective collieries, and found a large shortage ? If so, what was the quantity of shortage, and how was it explained ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) It is not in the public interest to disclose to what extent the present output of coal is below the requirements of the country.

(b) Coal Stocks were checked at the end of May 1943, and a shortage of over 2 million tons was found. During 1942 a number of collieries had given fictitious figures of raising probably in order to obtain a better wagon allotment. Proceedings have been taken against a number of collieries for submitting incorrect returns. Periodical checks are now made.

150

The Coal Mines Safety (Slowing) Amendment Bill

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member) : Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Coal Mines Safety (Slowing) Act, 1939.

Mr. **President** (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim): The question is:

" That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Coal Mines Safety (Slowing) Act, 1939."

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Sir, I introduce the Bill.

151

Lifting of Ban on Employment of Women on Underground Work in Coal Mines

Mr. **President** (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim): The next motion is in the name of Mrs. Renuka Ray. She wishes to discuss the question of permission given to women to work underground in the coal mines at Jharia and other neighbouring areas.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member) : The only point I would like to submit is that the matter which is sought to be raised on this adjournment motion cannot be said to be a matter of recent occurrence. The original notifications under which the prohibitions were lifted are two; one is dated the 2nd August 1943, and the other is dated the 18th August 1943. The notification dated the 24th November 1943, is merely a continuation of the notifications to which I have already referred and which are dated August 1943. There has been a Session of the Legislature after the August notifications were issued.

Mr. **President** (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : What was the notification ? Permitting women to work underground ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Yes. I would also like to say that I do not wish to take my stand on these formal objections to the motion, and if the House desires to have this matter discussed I am prepared to give in.

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated Non-Official) : May I say a word on this point ? Although the Government of India may have issued their notifications before the last Session of the Assembly, actual effect was given to them in the most important coal mining areas only recently. I therefore feel that the subject is of importance and of recent occurrence.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : The notifications of August did not refer to Jharia and other neighbouring areas ?

Mr. N. M. Joshi : No.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim): Were these areas excluded from the notification ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : No. We have proceeded stage by stage. The first intention of the Government of India to lift this prohibition was dated the 2nd August 1943. That applied to C. P. and Berar mines.

Mrs. Renuka Ray (Nominated Non-Official) : May I point out that the notifications of the 2nd and 18th August 1943 were protested against, but Government look no notice of the protests. In any case I have only brought up Jharia and other neighbouring areas and notifications relating to them came out after the last Session of the legislature.

Mr. **President** (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : That being so and as the Honourable Member in charge has no objection to the motion being discussed, the motion will be taken up at 4 o'clock.

152

Conservation of Coal in India

80. Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Has the attention of the Honourable Member for Labour been drawn to the observations on the question of conservation of coal in India made by Dr. H. K. Sen, Director, Indian Lac Research Institute, Narnkum, Ranchi, and Chairman of the Fuel Research Committee of the Board of Scientific and Industrial Research, in the course of certain lectures delivered in December, 1943, at the Patna University ?

(b) Is it a fact that this question has from time to time been raised for the consideration of Government by different experts ? If so, what action has so far been taken by Government in this matter ?

(c) To what extent and in what manner has the larger utilisation of low grade coal, particularly on the part of the Railways, as suggested by Dr. Sen in his aforesaid lectures, been carried out or is proposed to be carried out in future.

(d) Are these questions being taken up for immediate consideration in view particularly of difficulties of the present coal position in the country ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) No.

(b) Yes.

(i) In 1939 the Government of India passed the Coal Mines Slowing Act. The Slowing Board has, by assistance given to voluntary slowing achieved considerable success in the conservation of high quality coal.

(ii) Under certain regulations under the Indian Coal Mines Regulations passed in 1939 restrictions were imposed on the dimension of workings which, apart from their safety value, have led to the conservation of coal.

(c) Expert Combustion Engineers have been attached to the office of the Controller of Coal Distribution, one of whose duties will be to ensure that industries that can consume a lower grade of coal are not supplied with a higher grade. The assistance of Provincial Governments has been invited in conducting a survey of coal consuming factories through the agency of Boiler Inspectors in consultation with Combustion Engineers. Government attach importance to a vigorous fuel economy campaign and this is already receiving the attention of the Coal Commissioner. Low grade coal is supplied to the maximum extent possible for the various services against Railway demands.

(d) These questions are constantly under the attention of Government.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I think the Honourable Member said that his attention has not been drawn to the observations to which I refer.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : My attention has not been drawn to the lectures to which the Honourable Member refers.

Mr. K. C. Neogy : But they were reported in the press.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : They might have been.

Mr. K. C. Neogy : But is it not expected that the Honourable Member should take some notice of such important observations ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Not everything that appears in newspapers.

Mr. K. C. Neogy : But the gentleman holds rather a responsible position.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I would like the Honourable Member to send me a copy. I have not seen it.

Mr. K. C. Neogy : That is rather a pity. May I know whether in connection with the present coal drive he will see to it that as much as possible, and as high a proportion as possible, of the low grade coal is utilised for the purpose ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have already said that Government have undertaken measures in that direction.

Mr. K. C. Neogy : I was wanting the Honourable Member's assurance in connection with the present coal drive.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Certainly.

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee : May I ask how many experts have been employed.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I must have notice of that question.

to state:

(a) the latest position regarding coal production in India, and whether there has been any increase or reduction in raisings since the 1st December 1943; and, if so, to what extent;

(b) If he is aware that a number of colliery are not working at all or not working to full capacity;

(c) what steps, with a special reference to the provision of Labour, foodgrains, mechanisation and taxation adjustments;

(d) what steps are being taken;

(i) to deal with recalcitrant colliery owners who are deliberately refraining from producing the maximum possible; and

(ii) to ensure the efficient distribution of coal, and to prevent its going into the black market, and

(e) whether Railway collieries are working to full capacity; and if not, why not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Coal production has recently shown some improvement. Raisings in December 1943, showed an increase of over 20 per cent over November. January figures are not yet available; but it is believed that there has been a still further increase.

(b) Government are not aware of any mines which can be safely and economically worked and which have been closed down. A number of mines have not been able to work to full capacity due to shortage of Labour or machinery or to their workings having become flooded during the last monsoon.

(c)(i) A Government Labour force up to 10,000 men is being established in the Bengal and Bihar coalfields initially for work on quarrying or loading coal. It is hoped that after some experience it will work underground. The first 1,000 men have already arrived. A force of 1,000 men have also been provided temporarily by the military for coal loading. Government Labour has also been provided for railway collieries and for the Singareni collieries in Hyderabad. Steps are also being taken to prevent colliery workers being employed on other works in the coalfields.

(ii) The mining associations have agreed to provide foodgrains to their Labour at the rate of 6 seers to the rupee. The Government of India are arranging with Provincial Governments to provide foodgrains for miners and their dependants in certain quantities. In addition, wages together with dearness allowance have been raised to 50 per cent above their 1939 level. Further, the Government of India are encouraging all collieries to introduce a production bonus based either on attendance or on out-put, and it is understood that many collieries have already introduced such a bonus.

(iii) Every effort is being made to obtain machinery from abroad. Government is prepared to allow depreciation both for Excess Profits Tax and Income-tax on new coal cutting machinery now to be purchased at an annual

rate of 50 per cent on the written down value of such machinery. The trade have been asked whether they will accept these terms and if so, to send details of the machinery they require. Their reactions are awaited.

(iv) A proposal to encourage production by granting bonuses on increased out-put free of Excess Profits Tax is under discussion with the trade.

(v) Steps are also being taken to provide consumer goods, standard cloth and medical stores in adequate quantities.

(d) (i) Government are not aware of any colliery owner who is deliberately refraining from producing the maximum possible. In order, however, to prevent any such possibility, a scheme is under consideration and is being discussed with the trade by the Coal Commissioner, whereby a target figure of production will be fixed for each colliery. It is proposed under the scheme that where a mine owner fails to produce the target tonnage, the Coal Commissioner will, unless he is satisfied that there is some good reason for such default, issue a formal warning to the mine owner that in the event of persistent default, Government will requisition his mines and may, if circumstances so require, acquire the mines outright.

(ii) The distribution of coal is made by the Controller of Coal Distribution working under the direction of the War Transport

Department in accordance with a rationing scheme approved by the War Resources Committee of Council. All coal despatches are made against licenses or priority certificates issued from the Controller of Coal Distribution's office. These are based on the quotas fixed for each industry within the general rationing instructions and in line with the recommendations made by the Departments concerned with the various industries. Detailed day-to-day instructions are issued to each colliery as to the consignee against whom they should load. The actual loading on the part of the collieries receives a check at the weighment depot stations. The returns compiled by the depot stations are further scrutinised by the allotment offices. Inspectors working under the Railways and the Controller's organisation make frequent checks of actual booking at stations of arrival and at destination stations to ensure that collieries have booked the wagons to the consignee for whom the wagon has been allotted in accordance with the priority certificate, and that at the destination stations the wagon is delivered to the proper consignee and not allowed to go into the open market. Several cases of coal having been sold in the black market have been detected and prosecutions have been launched.

(e) Every possible step is being taken to develop the capacity of the Railway collieries to their full extent as quickly as circumstances permit. Whilst considerable progress has been made I am not yet in a position to state that all Railway Collieries are being worked to their full capacity. Present difficulties are due to :

(i) shortage of Labour,

(ii) unavoidable delay in the introduction of mechanical plant,

(iii) want of line capacity to move the increased output. All these difficulties

are expected to be overcome shortly.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan : In reply to part (b), the Honourable Member said about the collieries which are not working to full capacity. How many of them are represented by European companies ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I am unable to give any answer to that at this stage. I do not think we can have any information as to which are not working to full capacity and which of them are European-owned and which Indian-owned.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan : Will the Honourable Member be pleased to make an inquiry and inform this House during this session before the Railway Budget comes in ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I do not think I can undertake to make such an inquiry.

Mr. K. C. Neogy : Is the Honourable Member in a position to give the information asked for by Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan, not with reference to the nationality of the owning interest but as to whether all the collieries, big and small, are doing the work properly, and whether the Honourable Member's scheme is intended to apply to the smaller collieries as much as to the larger ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : It is intended to apply to all collieries and with regard to the first part of the question put by my Honourable friend all I can say is that I am prepared to undertake an inquiry which will help in producing more coal. I do not want to hold any assize enquiry over the coal mines.

Mr. N. M. Joshi : May I ask, whenever the Honourable Member makes a statement that the wages of the miners have been increased by 50 per cent, he will also state at the same time that the cost of living in the colliery areas has increased three times the pre-war cost of living index, in order to avoid misunderstanding regarding the statement which he makes ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I believe that this is a direction to me and not a question.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan : Is any quantity of coal exported from India ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: No, except to Ceylon.

Mr. N. M. Joshi : Is it a fact that the Honourable Member had stated that women miners are not compelled to go underground and if he has made such a statement, may I ask how he reconciles that fact with the statement which he has just now made that the Government of India are taking steps to refuse employment to miners elsewhere ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I do not see any contradiction.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan : In reply to part(c) of the question about the taxation adjustment, the Honourable Member has not explained what was the demand of the colliery owners—whether they were unwilling to pay the E. P.

T. and whether they have wanted exemption from the Payment of E. P. T. On what ground do they want to be exempted from E. P. T. ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : On the ground that coal was a wasting asset.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani : May I know the quantity of coal exported to Ceyton ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I must have notice of that question.

154

Publication of Certain Annual Reports Concerning Labour on Railways

43. Mr. **Lalchand Navalrai**: Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state if the following reports have since been issued ? If not, why not, and when are they likely to be issued ?

(i) Annual report on the working of the Patent of Wages Act, IV of 1936, by the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour, Calcutta; and

(ii) Annual report on the working of the Hours of Employment Regulations on the Indian Railways during the year 1941-42 ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The last reports published were for the year 1940-41. Printing of future reports has been temporarily discontinued due to acute shortage of paper.

155

The Coal Mines Safety (Slowing) Amendment Bill

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member): Mr. President, in view of the desire expressed by some Honourable Members of the House that they would like to have some more time to consider the Bill. I do not propose to make the motion for consideration of the Bill which is put down against my name.

156

Administrative Officers Promoted as Commissioned Officers in Civil Pioneer Force in Provinces

Mr. G. Rangiah Naidu: Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state:

(a) the number of Administrative Officers promoted as Commissioned Officers in the Civil Pioneer Force in various Provinces in 1941, 1942 and 1943; if not, why not;

(b) if there is any subsequent law passed to restrict the Civil Pioneer Force Officers to apply for Commissioned Officers' posts in the army;

(c) the number of Commissioned and Administrative Officers recruited from among the Hindus such as Non-Brahmins, Backward and Scheduled

Communities, Christians, Mahomedans and Anglo-Indians;

(d) the rate of daily rations of the Pioneer and that of the Administrative Officers, separately; and

(e) how many clerks who were working in the Civil Pioneer Force Department, were promoted as Administrative Officers in 1941, 1942 and 1943; if not, why not?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a), (c) and (e) With regard to these parts, three statements giving the required information separately are placed on the table of the House.

These refer to 1942 and 1943; the Civil Pioneer Force had not been raised in 1941.

(b) No, but if an officer undertakes service in the Civil Pioneer Force he is under an obligation to serve in the force so long as his services are required—*vide* Civil Pioneer Force Ordinance, Section 9. At present no officer can be released.

(d) Prior to 1st March 1943, no free ration was admissible to Administrative Officers; since then the concession has been extended to them at the same rate allowed to Civil Pioneers, namely, at a cost of Rs. 15 per mensem per head. Of late owing to fluctuations in prices of foodstuffs it has not been possible to maintain the rate. The Provincial Government have, therefore, been authorised to purchase rations on the approved scale at a cost not greater than the prevailing market rates provided the purchase is made by the Provincial authorities themselves.

STATEMENT Part (a)

Central Provinces and Berar	1942	}	5
	1943	}	
Orissa	1942	}	2
	1943	}	
Madras	1942	}	1
	1943	}	
Bombay	Nil		---
Punjab	1942		---
	1943		3
United Provinces	1942		---
	1943		1
Bihar	1942		---
	1943		2
Bengal	1942		3
	1943		11
North West Frontier Provinces	1942		1
	1943		2
Total			31

It should be noted that the two classes of officers are of quite separate status. If a candidate is accepted as an Administrative Officer, the Provincial

Governments are under no obligation to elevate him to Commissioned Officer grade. In certain cases, however. Administrative Officers, who have proved their worth, have been granted Commissions as 2nd Lieutenants when vacancies occurred.

**STATEMENT
Part (c)**

Provinces	Non Brahmins	Brahmins	Backward Classes	Scheduled Castes	Muslims	Christians	Anglo-Indians
Central Provinces and Berar							
Commissioned Officers	5	4	1	2	3	1	
Administrative Officers	8	5				1	
Orissa							
Commissioned Officers	18	9	1		4	2	
Administrative Officers							
Madras							
Commissioned Officers	34			7	7	*15	
Administrative Officers							
Bombay							
Commissioned Officers	2	6		3	2		
Administrative Officers	4	1	1		1		
Punjab							
Commissioned Officers	11			2	13	1	
Administrative Officers	8				9		
United Provinces							
Commissioned Officers	15			4	5	2	1
Administrative Officers	7			2	4	1	
Bihar							
Commissioned Officers	17			2	5	2	
Administrative Officers							
Bengal							
Commissioned Officers	31			17	56	7	
Administrative Officers							
Nort West Frontier Provinces							
Commissioned Officers					19		
Administrative Officers	1				7		
Total	161	25	3	39	135	32	1

* Includes both

STATEMENT Part (e)

Central Provinces and Berar	1942	}	2
	1943	}	
Orissa	1942		Nil
	1943		Nil
Madras	1942		2
	1943		1
Bombay	1942	}	1
	1943	}	
Punjab	1942		---
	1943		3
United Provinces			Nil
	1942		---

Bihar	1942		2
	1943		1
Bengal	1942		---
	1943		11
North West Frontier Provinces	1942		
	1943		1
Total			24

Clerks in the Civil Pioneer Force are on a relatively low rate of pay consequently not many of them are suitable for promotion to Administrative Officer.

Mr. G. Rangiah Naidu : Is it not a fact that in the beginning of the war these Administrative Officers were allowed to apply for posts of Commissioned Officers if and when vacancies arose ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have no information on the point.

157

Accommodation for Women Government Servants

112. Sir F. E. **James:** Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state:

(a) if there is a Labour Department rule to the effect that no Government servant earning less than Rs. 600 per month is entitled to accommodation in a Government hostel, hotel or other residence in Delhi or New Delhi classified as " first class accommodation ";

(b) whether this rule applies to women Government servants;

(c) if the answer to (b) is in the affirmative, if any variation of the rule is made in the case of women Government servants who live away from their homes and for whom the available accommodation is not suitable, or who, though not drawing more than Rs. 600 per month, are filling posts whose permanent male incumbents draw more than that amount;

(d) the composition of the Accommodation Advisory Committee;

(e) if this Committee is empowered to authorise departures from the above rule in suitable cases; and

(f) in how many cases this Committee has relaxed the rule in respect of women Government servants ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes.

(b) Yes.

(c) No.

(d) (i) Lt. General T. J. Hutton, C.B., M.C.

(ii) The Honourable Mr. H. C. Prior, C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S.

(iii) The Honourable Mr. E. Conran-Smith, C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S.

(iv) Mr. G. Mackworth-Young, C.I.E., I.C.S.

(e) No, the Committee can only make recommendations to His Excellency the Governor-General.

(f) In view of the answer to (e) above, this does not arise.

Sir F. E. James : My Honourable friend is doubtless aware of the hardship which the rigid application of this rule inflicts upon a number of perfectly good, hard-working and deserving women in Government service ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I am aware of that.

Mr. N. M. Joshi : May I ask if the Government of India propose to introduce rationing of accommodation in view of the difficulty felt by several people ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I can give no answer at this stage.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra : May I ask when was this Accommodation Advisory Committee appointed and who appointed it ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I have no information available at this stage.

158

Introduction of Women Labour in Coal Mines

114. Mr. **Lalchand** Navalrai : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the Honourable Member has re-introduced women Labour in coal mines ?

(b) Is it a fact that women Labour in coal mines in India was abolished under popular pressure ?

(c) Is it a fact that Mr. Amery, Secretary of State for India, evaded the question put to him recently in the House of Commons, as to whether women Labourers were paid the same wages as men, and whether they were working under ground ?

(d) Does the Honourable Member propose to make a statement on the two points referred to in (c) above ?

(e) Is it a fact that man Labour for coal mines is available in India ? If so, why is not that Labour being utilised instead of women Labour ?

(f) Is it a fact that the women are employed because they work harder and are satisfied with little, though their health suffers and their families are broken ? If not, what are the special reasons to re-engage women instead of men ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Women Labourers are now allowed to work underground in coal mines in the Central Provinces and Berar, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.

(b) It has been for many years the deliberate policy of the Government of India that women Labour should not be allowed to be employed underground in coal mines in India. Provision to this end was made in the Indian Mines Act, 1923. In 1929 women began to be excluded from underground workings and the process was complete in 1937.

(c) I have no information.

(d) No. I made a statement on these two points in answering the

adjournment motion moved by Mrs. Renuka Ray on 8th February.

(e) Women have been allowed to work underground owing to the severe shortage of male Labour. As soon as there is an assured male Labour force sufficient to raise the quantity of coal required by Government, Government will consider reimposing the ban on the employment of women underground. Government are taking immediate steps to import male Labour into Bengal and Bihar coalfields.

(f) No. As stated in answer to (c) women have been allowed underground in certain coalfields because sufficient men were not available.

Mr. **Lalchand Navalrai** : With reference to part (b), may I know if it is a fact that Labour of women was abolished under public pressure ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I cannot answer that question, because I do not know.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : May I know if before lifting the ban on women Labour, the public was consulted or if the Government removed that ban *suo motu* ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The Government consulted the interests concerned.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : Did they object to it ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar**: No objection.

Mr. N. M. Joshi : With reference to part (c), does the Honourable Member say that he has no information whether women are paid equal wages with men ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The point of the question was whether the Secretary of State evaded the question. I said I have no information on the point. Women are paid the same wages as men.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: As regards equal payment of wages, is the Honourable Member aware that for men and women who work underground, wages are fixed on the basis of joint work of both ? How then does he say that men and women are paid equal wages ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: If it is brought to the attention of the Government that methods are adopted by which this rule is evaded, the Government will certainly take action in the matter.

Mr. N. M. **Joshi** : Will the Honourable Member enquire whether there is a proper method by which they can find out whether men and women miners are paid equal wages ? My own information is that men and women are paid for joint work and, therefore, it is impossible to find out whether the wages are equal, because both of them get joint payment.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I am unable to go into that. I can assure the Honourable Member that Government are contemplating about the appointment of Inspectors whose duty it will be to see that the welfare measures which have been announced by the Government are carried out.

Mr. N. M. Joshi : In view of the fact that trade unions both in this country

as well as Great Britain are interested in this question of women working underground, will the Honourable Member publish a sort of report on the present conditions of women working underground ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I will consider the suggestion.

159

Centres for Training War Technicians

120. Syed **Ghulam Bhik** Nairang: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to lay on the table a statement mentioning the names of the centres for training war technicians, and the number of trainees permitted for each centre?

(b) How many centres have been opened in connection with: (i) Government institutions; (ii) Railway workshops ; and (iii) private institutions ?

(c) How many of these private institutions belong to the Hindus, and how many to the Mussalmans ?

(d) What is the number of trainees sanctioned for each of these categories ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) A statement is laid on the table.

(b) (i) 125 [including centres belonging to Indian States (25), Municipal Corporations (4), Municipal Committees (4), District Boards (5)]. (ii) 26. (iii) 119.

(c) and (d). The private training centres are attached to industrial concerns, technical institutions, etc., and in many cases are managed by limited companies. Board of Trustees, etc. In such cases it is not possible to say without detailed inquiries whether they are predominantly Hindu or Muslim owned. There are seven training centres with 763 seats, which are clearly owned by Muslims, and 27 centres with 5,184 seats which are clearly owned by Hindus.

160

Deputy Directors, Senior Regional Inspectors, Regional Inspectors and Technical Inspectors

121. Syed **Ghulam Bhik** Nairang : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state the number of Deputy Directors, Senior Regional Inspectors, Regional Inspectors and Technical Inspectors ?

(c) How many of these are Mussalmans ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) The numbers are as follows:

Deputy Directors of Training	2
Senior Regional Inspectors of Technical Training	7
Regional Inspectors of Technical Training	15
Technical Inspectors	8

The fifteen Regional Inspectors include seven, who are part-time and four who are honorary officers. The 8 Technical Inspectors include three part-time officers. (b) None.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahinad : None of these are Muslims ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I said so.

161

Bevin Boys sent to England for Training

122. Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state how many Bevin Boys have already been sent to England for training ?

(b) How many of these are Mussalmans ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) 563.

(b) 110.

162

Chairmen of National Service Labour Tribunals

123. Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state the total number of Chairmen of National Service Labour Tribunals ?

(b) How many of these are Mussalmans ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Ten. Of these four are whole-time Chairmen; and the remaining six are part-time Chairmen who hold other whole-time appointments either under the Central or the Provincial Government.

(b) One.

163

Qualifications and Duties of Coal Commissioner

142. Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please refer to his reply given in the Legislative Assembly on the 17th November 1943, to question No. 250, that " the principal factor that contributed to the shortage of coal is undoubtedly the shortage of Labour", and state why it was deemed necessary by Government to appoint a Coal Commissioner to help to increase coal raising when the primary cause of shortage, according to his above-mentioned reply, was shortage of Labour ?

(b) What will be the duties of the Coal Commissioner, and what are the qualifications of the person appointed ? Are Government satisfied that no Indian of the requisite qualifications is available ?

(a) What will be the official relations of the Coal Commissioner with the Labour Department, the Railway Department and any other Department of the Government, respectively ?

(d) What emoluments will the coal Commissioner be entitled to ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The Honourable Member for War

Transport has agreed to answer the question on the 24th February 1944.

164

Measures for Increasing Coal Output

273. Mr. K. S. Gupta: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state the measures adopted to increase the output of coal to meet the bare necessities like train service and maintenance of indigenous industries ?

(b) Is it a fact that service in the mines (coal) is highly injurious to health of the miners ?

(c) Is it a fact that no special amenities are offered to coal miners to attract efficient and skilled workers to the service ?

(d) Is it a fact that miners and their families are housed in insufficient and insanitary surroundings ?

(e) Is it a fact that no medical aid and facilities for education of children are available in the coal mining areas ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) I would refer the Honourable member to my reply to Sir F. E. James starred question No. 82 on 10th February, which gives the principal measures which Government have adopted to increase the output of coal.

(b) No. Mining is a dangerous occupation but not necessarily injurious to health.

(c) No. Coal miners have been offered food at concession rates and Government are taking steps to increase the supply of consumer goods in the coal fields, it is proposed to increase the amenities offered to coal miners by measures taken under the new Coal mines Labour welfare Fund Ordinance.

(d) In the Jharia and Raniganj coalfields housing consists of pucca buildings built in accordance with specifications laid down by the Jharia and Asansol Mines Boards of Health. In other coalfields the housing is arranged at the miners' discretion for the resident Labour which is usually very small. Government are, however, not satisfied with the present arrangements for housing and sanitation in coalfields and schemes to improve these are being prepared under the Coal mines Labour welfare Fund Ordinance.

(e) Medical aid and educational facilities which at present exist are not very satisfactory. Schemes to improve these facilities are being prepared under the Coal mines Labour welfare Fund Ordinance.

Mr. N. M. **Joshi** : Will the Government of India make some report to the Legislature on the conditions in coal mines with regard to housing and other conditions and also the improvements made by Government, and place that report before the House ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : There is nothing to report upon, so far as I can see. We have just begun the work and if after some time this Ordinance has been in operation my Honourable friend wants to have a report I shall be quite prepared to consider the matter.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: The House is greatly interested in this matter and would like to have information about the conditions there and the improvements made. Will they therefore, make a report to the House ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I have answered that already.

165

The Factories (Amendment) Bill

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member) : Sir, I move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the factories Act, 1934.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim): The question is:

" That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the factories Act, 1934. " The motion was adopted.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Sir, I introduce the Bill.

166

Scheduled Castes Subjected to Forced Labour and *Begar*

Rao Bahadur N. Siva Raj : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state:

(a) whether protection and welfare of agricultural Labour is the function of the Labour department of the Government of India;

(b) whether he is aware of the resolution passed at the annual Session of the All-India Scheduled Castes Federation held at Cawnpore on the 29th and 30th January, 1944, condemning the system of *begar* forced Labour prevalent all over India and of which the Scheduled Castes are the only victims;

(c) what action Government propose to take to stop the system of *begar*; and

(d) whether the Government of India propose to appoint a Committee to investigate into the system, with a view to abolishing the same by law ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The subject falls under the Labour department, among departments of the Government of India; the general subject is one included in the list of concurrent subjects in part II of list III of the Seventh-Schedule to the Government of India act, 1935.

(b) No formal communication has been received from the All-India, Scheduled Castes Federation.

(c) Government of India has not considered the question so far.

(d) The suggestion will be considered in due course.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh : Is the Honourable Member aware that in the Central Provinces and berar this *begar*, has been abolished ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have no information on the point.

Mr. K. C. Neogy : May I know if it is not a fact that His Excellency the Crown Representative and his agents have been impressing upon the state

administrations that this sort of forced Labour should be discontinued, and that this has led to very beneficial results in certain parts of the country ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I am glad to have the information.

Dr. Sir Zia uddin Ahmad : May I know whether the Honourable Member is aware of the fact that in the United Provinces, out of what they call the cultivators, 35 per cent are village Labourers and they do not get any benefit on account of high prices. The cultivators do not get them in kind. They are paid in money and they find it exceedingly difficult.....

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: What is the question ?

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad : The question is whether the Honourable Member is aware of this fact that the cultivators.....

President (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : The Honourable Member has made a long speech.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: I want to know whether the Honourable Member is aware of it and what action do the Government propose to take. That is the question.

(No answer)

167

Extension of Activities of the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour

394. **Mr. Lalchand Navalrai :** Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state if any decision has been taken in the matter of extension of activities of the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour, to Railways other than those with headquarters at Calcutta, as said in reply to my starred question No. 131, asked on the 13th November last ? if not, when is it likely to be taken ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : A decision on the question has been postponed pending consideration of wider proposals regarding the machinery for settlement of trade disputes in central undertakings generally.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : Will that take place after the war is over or will it be introduced now ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : That is not an inference which is justified by the answer I have given.

168

Scheduled Caste Commissioned Officers in the United Provinces Civil Pioneer Force

415. **Mr. Piare Lall Kureel:** With reference to his answer to starred question No. 111 regarding Commissioned Officers in the Civil Pioneer Force, asked by Mr. G. Rangiah Naidu on the 15th February, 1944, will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state the names of the scheduled Caste commissioned Officers in the United Provinces Civil Pioneer Force ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: A statement is laid on the table of

the House.

Statement showing particulars of Scheduled Caste candidates appointed as Commissioned Officers in the United Provinces Civil Pioneer Force Units.

Name of Scheduled Castes Officer		Date and Rank of first appointment	Present Rank	Total No. of officers appointed	No. of Scheduled Caste Officers appointed.
1. Nand Lal Kureel	19-5-43	2nd Lieut.	2 nd Lieut	28	4
2. S. K. Mulick	3-7-43	do.	do.		
3. K. B. Bhale Rao	19-11-43	do.	do.		
4. Kshetra Pal Singh Sagar	29-1-44	do.	do.		

169

Communal Composition of Civil Pioneer Force Clerks

416. Mr. Piare Lall Kureel : Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of clerks in the Civil Pioneer Force in various Provinces; and

(b) how many of these clerks are Hindus, Muslims, Scheduled castes, Christians and Anglo Indians, separately in various provinces ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Many units are in a war area and others are with the army at outstations and that, therefore, it is not possible in these circumstances to collect the information asked for.

170

Disparity between Unorthodox and Orthodox Quarters in New Delhi

493. Sardar Sant Singh: Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state:

(a) whether the plinth and ground area, including outhouses and garden, is much larger in the case of unorthodox clerks' quarters than in the corresponding type of orthodox clerks' quarters (especially in the Minto Road Area), so much so that, while the tenants of unorthodox quarters raise a good crop of vegetables, lay flower beds, rear poultry, can keep milk, cattle and have badminton or tennis ground, there is not enough open space in orthodox quarters even to lay charpois for an average family during summer, and that the roofs of the " D " and " E " orthodox types are so low that they become heated very quickly during summer and cannot be occupied;

(b) whether the quality of materials, viz, timber, bolts, etc., used in the construction of an unorthodox quarter and the furniture supplied therein are much superior to those used in the orthodox type of quarters, the workmanship also being superior;

(c) whether the following special amenities and fittings provided in unorthodox quarters are absent in orthodox quarters :— (i) gardens and shrubs, (ii) servants' quarters, (iii) iron grates in fireplaces, (iv) wall almirahs,

(v) fittings for curtains and rings for hanging chinks, (vi) wash basin in bath

rooms, (vii) unfiltered water connection in compound, and (viii) Venetian window shutters in the "D" and " E " orthodox

quarters;

(d) whether no cattle sheds are allowed to be constructed in orthodox quarters below the category " B" while they are allowed in unorthodox quarters;

(e) whether in the Public Works Department Enquiry Offices, more prompt attention is given to complaints from unorthodox quarters and preference is also shown to unorthodox quarters in the matter of annual repairs and general maintenance, etc. ;

(f) whether the cost of maintenance of an unorthodox quarter is much more than that of an orthodox quarter, and that, while return on capital in the case of an unorthodox quarter is comparatively negligible, the orthodox quarters provide adequate revenue to Government;

(g) if the reply to (a) be in the affirmative, the reasons for discriminating between unorthodox and orthodox types of quarters in regard to amenities referred to and for charging rent on the same basis, *i.e.*, ten per cent for both types; and

(h) whether Government are prepared to amend their Fundamental Rules so as to make them conform to strict business principles ; if not, why not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) The answer to first part of the question is in affirmative and to the latter in the negative.

(b) No.

(c) yes so far as items No. (I), (iii), (iv), (v), (vi) and (viii) are concerned. A room for servant exists in other than D and E orthodox quarters and unfiltered water connection is provided in the open compound outside the orthodox quarters.

(b) Yes.

(b) No.

(c) The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. As regards the second part, the position is as follows: Government servants occupying quarter of both the types pay standard rent or 10 per cent. Of their pay, whichever is less, but the standard rents of orthodox quarters being lower, a larger number of occupants pay the standard rent.

(d) The amenities provided in the two types of quarters are in accordance with the standard designs which were prepared to suit the orthodox and unorthodox styles of living. Rent is charged according to rules.

(e) No. Government provide accommodation at concessional rates as laid down in the rules, which cannot be varied to suit the varying circumstances of officers.

Sardar Sant Singh : May I know if it is a part of the rule to provide water in

the compound of the orthodox quarters and in the case of the unorthodox quarters only in the quarter itself?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: That must be so.

171

Promotion of Qualified Copyholders and Revisers as Readers in Government of India Presses

501. Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury: (a) With reference to the reply to part (d) of starred question No. 231 put by Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi, on the 25th February 1944, regarding promotion of Copyholders and Revisers as Readers in the Government of India Press, will the Honourable the Labour Member kindly state whether the ' anomaly ' is due to the fact that departmental men passing in earlier dates do not get any preference whatsoever over those who pass in the second chance in subsequent examinations ?

(f) Is he aware that those who pass the examination earlier stand distinctly higher in order of merit and efficiency and experience in Readers' posts ?

(g) Is it a fact that the present anomaly and the hardship that existed before the promulgation of the existing rule can not be removed unless the date of passing is accepted as a clarion for determining the position of the candidates for Readers' posts ?

(d) Do Government propose to promote the candidates to readers' posts on the basis of seniority *cum efficiency*, i.e., according to seniority but in order of the dates of passing the examination ? If not, why not ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar**: (a) No.

(b) No. The earlier passing of the examination does not necessarily mean higher merit.

(c) There is no anomaly in the case of persons who qualify at the Readership examination in the first or second chance. As regards men who qualify in the third chance, certain anomalies have arisen and the question of removing them is now under consideration, as stated in reply to part (d) of Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi's question No. 231.

(d) The Readership examination is a qualifying examination and every candidate is permitted to avail of two chances. Government do not propose to regulate promotion in order of the dates of passing the examination.

172

Biharis as Assistant Geologists

504. **Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall** : Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state :

(a) if it is not a fact that in the Department of Geological Survey of India vacancies are filled on the basis of quota fixed for each Province;

(b) the quota fixed for Bihar for the posts of Assistant Geologists ; (c) how

many Biharis are working at present as Assistant Geologists or in a higher capacity; and

(d) the quotas for different Provinces ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) No.

(c) Does not arise.

(c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

(d) Does not arise.

173

Promotion of Qualified Copyholders and Revisers as Readers in Government of India Presses

* 506. Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall : Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the case of amending the rule regarding the promotion of qualified Copy holders and Revisers as Reders in Government of India Presses is under consideration;

(b) whether it is a fact that the views of all the Government of India Presses, their Works Committees and Workers' Union which were invited, are also under examination;

(c) whether it is a fact that some qualified Copyholders who passed the Readership Examination in the year 1936, according to the present rules, have been superseded by those who qualified after four years (in 1940) ; and

(d) whether it is a fact that these men who passed the examination at a sufficiently earlier date, were superseded by those who qualified after a long period ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes. Attention is invited to the reply given on the 25th February 1944, to Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi's question No. 231.

(b) Yes.

(c) and (d). No. As the Rules in force till 1940 required re-qualifying, no supersession was involved.

174

Transfer of Languages Section of Bureau of Public Information to Lahore

140. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state the area of the space allotted to the Languages Section (excluding officers) in Lahore, and the total strength of the staff accommodated therein ? Do Government consider this adequate for the efficiency of the staff ? Was not even this much space available in Delhi ?

(b) Are Government aware that the lavatory has been provided for the staff and the improvised urinal has no drainage arrangement ?

(c) What is the strength of the staff belonging to the Brureau of Public Information which has been transferred from Delhi to Lahore ? Of them how

many were provided with quarters in Delhi, and how many in Lahore ? How many of them have so far surrendered their quarters in Lahore on grounds of inadequate accommodation ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) An area of 4,587 Sq. ft. was allotted to this office. The ministerial staff consist of 48 persons.

Second part—Yes. Third part—No.

(b) The answer to the first half of the question is in the affirmative and to the second half in the negative.

(c) Strength of the staff that moved from Delhi	35
Number of the staff provided with quarters in Delhi	7
Number of the staff provided with quarters in Lahore	18
Number of the staff that surrendered accommodation in Lahore on grounds of inadequacy	5

175

Delays at Sales Office of Manager of Publications, Delhi

141. **Mr. Kailashbihari Lall:** Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state if it is a fact that a person has to wait for hours for publications at the counter of the Sales Office of the office of the Manager of Publications, Old Bihar

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The reply is in the negative.

176

Election of Members to the Standing Committee for the Labour Department

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member): Sir I move:

" That this Assembly do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Honourable the president may direct, five non-official Members to serve on the Standing Committee to advise on subjects, with which the Labour Department is concerned."

177

Scheme for Control of Price and Distribution of Coal, etc.

577. **Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state if it is a fact that a scheme for control of distribution and price control of coal and for encouragement of increase of output has been made ? If so, will the Honourable Member be pleased to state and lay on the table as well a statement giving detail of the policy forming the background of this scheme ?

(b) Is it a scheme which does away with the middlemen between colliery owners and actual consumers ? If so, what are the advantages accruing in consequence of the scheme, and the disadvantages created by the scheme to the present coal suppliers ?

(c) Why should a bonus be paid to collieries for excess raising of coal, or

why should a commission of 0-4-0 be paid by collieries and consumers to any middleman when collieries can supply to consumers directly ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes. A statement regarding the scheme, is placed on the table. The scheme consists of five parts : (a) an estimation of the monthly output of each colliery, (b) the formation of a Coal Control Board to advise Government on the working of the scheme, (c) the distribution of all output by Government at fixed prices, (d) the encouragement of production by the grant of bonuses on increased output free of Excess Profits Tax, and (e) control of mining operations. The intention behind the scheme is (i) to ensure that all the coal available is properly distributed at fair prices to the consumers who require it and (ii) to afford every encouragement to the maximum production of coal. (b) No. The second part of the question does not arise. (c) The bonus is paid to encourage production. The amount of the commission has not been fixed. It will be fixed by the Government of India. A middleman will only be employed if a colliery and consumers mutually agree that he should be employed.

178

Levy of Cess on Coal for Bonus Fund Purposes

578. Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya : Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state whether it is a fact that cess will be levied on coal for creating a fund to meet the bonus to be paid to collieries ? Is it not a double tax on consumers ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The answer to the first part is that that is the intention. As regards the second point the imposition of the cess would mean in all probability a tax on consumers—but the bonus is itself for the benefit of consumers as tending to increase the production of coal which at present is insufficient for consumer's needs.

179

Deduction from Overtime of Muslim Employees of the Government of India Press, New Delhi, for Friday Prayers

587. Seth Yusuf Abdoola Haroon (on behalf of Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi) : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state whether it is a fact that one hour is deducted from the Overtime of the Muslim employees of the Government of India Press, New Delhi, who go on Friday to offer Friday Congregation Prayers ?

(b) Is it a fact that previously no deduction was made for this one hour?

(c) Have Government considered the advisability of resuming the old practice or in the alternative to consider that one hour as a part of the casual leave or leave on average pay ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes.

(b) Prior to 1931, no deduction was made, but this practice was irregular and was abolished.

(c) In view of the reply to part (b), the other questions do not arise. Under

the Indian factories Act, an employee is entitled to overtime for the hours worked in excess of the normal working hours fixed under the Act. In calculating overtime, prayer intervals are deducted from the total hours worked by the employee.

Seth Yusoof Abdoola Haroon: Does the Honourable Member know that this trouble has arisen because the Government of India have advanced the time by one hour?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar**: I do not think so.

Seth Yusoof Abdoola Haroon: Does the Honourable Member suggest that prayer time can be changed because Government have changed their time ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: It is not a question of prayer time being changed. The question relates to whether prayer time should be allowed as overtime work.

180

Wages in the Government of India Press, New Delhi, for work on Sundays and Other Holidays

588. **Seth Yusuf Abdoola Haroon** (on behalf of **Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi**) : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state whether it is a fact that on the instructions of the Manager of the Government of India Press, New Delhi, employees come on Sundays and other festival holidays to cope with the urgent work of Government but after the day's work they are given only four hours' wages, but previously twelve hours' wages used to be paid to them ?

(b) Have Government considered the advisability of resuming the old practice of paying twelve hours' charges to those who receive regular pay after working for eight hours on closed days, or at least increase four hours to eight hours ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The reply to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. As regards the second part, in accordance with the Indian Factories Act, men working on Sundays are allowed, in lieu of a compensatory holiday, an extra payment for 4 hours' work, that is, their day's pay *plus* and additional 50 per cent. For attendance on other closed holidays, an additional 25 per cent. of their day's pay is allowed. Twelve hours' extra wages (that is, a day's pay *plus* 150 per cent.) instead of the 4 hours' permissible were paid by mistake some years ago.

(b) No.